

**OBITUARY:
CELESTE GREEN, SCIENTIFIC ILLUSTRATOR,
1913-1994**

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The literature of biology, especially entomology, lost one of its finest artists on 10 Jan 1994. Celeste Green provided accurate and beautiful pictorial support for hundreds of new species of insects, primarily Coleoptera (Cerambycidae), but also Diptera, Hemiptera and a few other orders. Her finest illustration, of a bee (*Protosaxea*), a magnificent framed 8×10" painting, presented to EGL upon his retirement, was unfortunately lost in the Oakland-Berkeley Hills Fire of 1992.

Celeste was born on 16 Nov 1913. Her early childhood was spent in Carmel, California, where her father managed the famous Highland Inn Hotel. Her artistic ability became evident early, and she won several local talent contests. Later, in Oakland, she attended high school and upon graduation pursued her art training at the California College of Arts and Crafts. Her first professional work was in the field of fashion illustrating in Oakland, and later she taught this subject at the prestigious Jean Turner Art School in San Francisco.

Since the mid-1950s, when she was employed by the Department of Entomology, as Senior Scientific Illustrator, her many contributions have enriched publications in *The Pan-Pacific Entomologist*, the *University of California Publications in Entomology*, the *Bulletin of the California Insect Survey*, the *Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences*, and other journals, domestic and foreign.

She also contributed examples of her work to a general text book on scientific illustration and as chapter headings to an autobiography of R. L. Usinger. Unfortunately, the high cost of color illustration limited the use of her talent in this field. However, two particularly fine examples may be seen: one of *Plinthocoelium suaveolens plicatum* (LeConte), as the Frontispiece of Linsley (1964), and another of *Crossidius* spp., as plates 1 and 2 of Linsley & Chemsak (1961).

Retirement, in 1980, took Celeste to Indiana to be closer to her children, and in 1986 she moved to the northwest (Gig Harbor, Washington), where she remained until her death. Her daughter, Kathleen Petrilli, gives this account of these chapters in her life:

She first moved to Indiana, where she became fascinated in researching and making corn husk dolls, i.e., doll-size figures made from dried corn husks. Many of these dolls depicted pioneer life in mid-America. During this time, Celeste was living in Carmel, Indiana and she created a replica of the historic train station complete with corn husk figures. This train station was on display in the city of Carmel for several months.

During this time in the mid-West, both Celeste and her sister Pat developed a small antique/pottery mending business. They did repair work for local antique dealers. Although they kept this business small, their reputation quickly grew and there was continual demand for their skills and services.



Figure 1. Celeste Green. 1967.

Her final move was to the Pacific Northwest and her life in her beloved “brown house” on the waterfront of Gig Harbor, Washington.

This was the period when Celeste’s artistic interests turned to undersea life and Native American Indians of the N.W. She began making fish and sea creatures out of a clay-like substance called sculpey which could be baked and hardened in the oven. In 1992, she created a complete coral reef depicting undersea life in the Puget Sound region.

During her sojourn in the N.W., Celeste became interested in Indian history and folk lore particularly the history of Indian Kachina dolls. Both she and her sister Pat created wonderful Indian masks and dolls that now adorn our home. (For me, they truly embody the creative spirit that was my mother’s special gift.)”

But these tributes to her talent and artistic ability do not record Celeste’s personality and humanity. She was a lovely individual, loved by those who knew her well, and respected by those with less frequent contacts. Within the University, these included faculty, staff, and students—graduate and undergraduate. We had the unique privilege of sharing a museum laboratory with her and we are honored to have an opportunity to publish this tribute to her memory.

LITERATURE CITED

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